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23 May 1969

COINS LOG

A meeting of the COINS Committee was held at CIA Hqs. on 22 May. Subsystem managers were present and represented except for the State Department.

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1) Progress Reports. [redacted] George, mentioned that he was anxious to receive progress reports on COINS tasks, a form for which was sent to the subsystem managers last week. He would like to assemble the progress reports for the COINS <sup>annual</sup> report. CIA's progress report was already in, but due to some mail mix up, NIC had not yet even received their forms.

2) System Test. No mention was made of the test held last week. Previously [redacted] had told me that as far as CIA was concerned, the results were about the same as the previous test. The next test will be held for one day only, Tuesday the 27th of May with an analysis on Wednesday, 28 May, and a test will be repeated the following week. Part of the trouble with DIA has been that they have been dropping segments on the switch. [redacted] explained some of the problems, an explanation which I was technically incompetent to understand. He called it a framing problem. The switch is not framing characters at the end of each segment and sometimes framing two sets at the beginning of the segment. This happens on the receive side from NSA (when and NSA generates an answer to a query). The problem is ~~not~~ in the machine, <sup>in</sup> not in the program.

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[ ] mentioned that every test message, for that matter anything processed on the switch, will be on the disk, and the disk has enough capacity that even a test day does not completely fill the disk. Everything will be available for analysis. [ ]

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[ ] also requested users <sup>of</sup> ~~to~~ COINS to put the test queries on a high priority (5) to get a better response. There was a discussion as to whether COINS was now in a full duplex mode, or only a half duplex mode. That is, are they sending both ways simultaneously or not? Actually, COINS is sending and receiving simultaneously but on two different lines. It is simply because that's the way IBM builds their equipment. They were not sure, however, that CIA was functioning that way. NSA is initiating correspondence to "ARQ" each end of the line between NSA and DIA at the request of NSA's TCOM. This area detection and correction equipment has some retransmit capability. This will be at no cost to the users. NSA will merely "redeploy available equipment". This requires one set of equipment for each pair of lines. They have used this on other long distance nets that NSA has put in.

On these other nets that NSA has built around the country, there have been "noise bursts" on the line and the ARQ equipment has helped solve such problems.

3) COINS Goals and Objectives. George stated that the major thing he wanted to get at this meeting <sup>was</sup> ~~is~~ the COINS objectives.

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[ ] presented his re-write of the goals and objectives and intimated strongly that this version <sup>was</sup> ~~is~~ have [ ] blessing

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and the blessing of other people at CIA whose approval<sup>he</sup> would have to have on any COINS objective. He <sup>did</sup> ~~would~~ not change any of the objectives but combined two of the ones on files. He cut back on a lot of the prose on the backup to the objectives. He stated that Leo actually had only a few word changes. They would drop the pet phrase of George's which stated that while there will be an attempt to accomplish all of the objectives during the experiment some of them may not be solved until the follow-on system. There followed a rather detailed discussion of both the old and [ ] new objectives. [ ] had considerable changes to make on the old objectives for DIA. The upshot of the entire discussion<sup>was</sup> that DIA will read [ ] objectives carefully and try to work out any disagreements on them through George. A copy of [ ] version is attached. Page 3, paragraph 1 of part (b) got some objections from DIA and may possibly be changed or dropped. In discussing [ ] dropping ~~some~~ of the mention of centralizing files, in the backup to the objectives, George stated that as far as he was concerned, there are two main reasons for a network. First, there are the economics of shared data bases, that is, by centralizing a file (or, as Young added, by fixing a file building responsibility) and, second, the speed of accessability. These are George's reasons for COINS and it seems obvious that if the follow-on system does not try to get rid of overlapping files it will not be a success by his standard.

George had a meeting with General Carter for about a half-hour. They discussed the goals, objectives, and status of the experiment <sup>and</sup> of the problem area. The discussion of this meeting with

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General Carter brought up the basic dissatisfaction and impatience of the higher-level authority on the delays on COINS. [ ] stated that he had a meeting with [ ] where [ ] said "if we don't get this show on the road, someone might put the system over the fence". I asked if there was a firmer date on when NSA would switch COINS to the 494. NSA cannot go off the air when they switch from the 490 to the 494, as NPIC is doing, because the system must continue to handle 150,000 queries a month, and the switchover must be arranged so it is merely a matter of directing the switch. [ ] and George agreed that there was very little similarity in the problems of conversion from a 490 to 494 between NPIC and NSA. [ ] of NSA did not think there would be more COINS <sup>system</sup> ~~standards~~ problems when NSA goes to the 494. George doesn't feel that sure, though. There are always problems with the executive program.

During the discussion concerning the impatience of the higher levels with COINS progress, there was some discussion on what could be done about hastening COINS, or at least assuring that it meets the 1 October deadline. Both [ ] and George felt that irrespective of the delays, they would have to go through with the COINS Experiment. They felt that even if COINS were dissolved as [ ] suggested as a possibility, the problems for which COINS was designed to cope would still exist and that something very similar to COINS would have to be reinstated and all this work

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which COINS has gone through would have to be redone as well (only this time with a new cast of characters). [ ] stated that [ ]

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25X1 [ ]<sup>A)</sup> suspects that there are some basic engineering problems bothering COINS. The NSA people felt that communications engineers and computer engineers didn't talk the same language and that it is a mistake to have them working together unless it is impossible to avoid it. There was some talk about the security problems and the fact that <sup>computer</sup> ~~IBM-hardware~~ people seem much more reluctant to look into the security problems in computers than the communications people who have had <sup>more</sup> ~~no~~ experience in this field. One of the most reluctant, of course, was IBM, and there was some discussion about the trouble with getting stuck with just one company's equipment.

Dan mentioned that the IDHS communications system, which he said will be coming in about a year, will have its own switch and will not be tied into COINS. George said that DIA will have problems with this net just like the problems that COINS has had.

The technical memorandum of agreement on the airfields file has been received from the airfields panel and copies were being sent to the COINS members for formal coordination.

Dan mentioned that State had asked for additional <sup>fields</sup> ~~files~~ to be established in the WSSMA file (Weekly Statistical Summary of Vietnamese Activities). However, data for these <sup>fields</sup> ~~files~~ has not been collected <sup>in</sup> ~~on~~ Vietnam. The requirement for data collection was dropped when the bombing activity over North Vietnam stopped. The ball is back in State Department's court to get a collection requirement going, and it will take about six months before they can start receiving data

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for the new fields in this file. The new fields concern artillery fire below the DMZ and <sup>whether it originates inside north of</sup> with the origination from the DMZ or ~~behind~~ the DMZ. This brought up the question, <sup>now</sup> or new partially covered by COINS Operating Procedure I, on how one agency can cause changes in another's file. Dan gave as an example three files in DIA which have the same format and the only difference is the areas that they concern. All three are  but only one of them is on COINS. How would another agency go about changing the data fields in the non-COINS files? Incidentally, these three files are undergoing name changes.

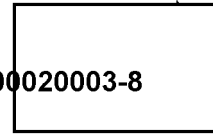
The next meeting will be held at NPIC on the 5th of June at 10:00 A.M.

JE

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*Jan Emerson's copy*

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## COINS

### Goal and Objectives

1. Goal: The COINS Experiment is a feasibility test of interagency information handling, making use of interconnected computer-based files, to determine the utility of this system to intelligence analysts and other users.
2. Objectives:
  - a. To design, develop, and implement an experimental, inter-agency, on-line, computer-based, intelligence information system with remote access capability which will operate at the Top Secret SI security level.
  - b. To test the COINS capability to make data bases in one agency more readily accessible to analysts in other agencies, and  
← to ascertain the essential characteristics of files which make them suitable for inclusion in a COINS-like network.
  - c. To provide practical training and actual experience for intelligence analysts in the use of an interagency on-line intelligence information system.
  - d. To determine those elements of the system design which encourage and facilitate analyst usage and those elements which discourage or hinder usage.
  - e. To collect the necessary data on system usage, efficiency, and reliability and user reaction to permit an evaluation of the feasibility and utility of operational implementation of a follow-on COINS system.

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f. To determine the elements and attributes which would be critical to ~~the success of a full system for continuing community~~ operations, and develop objectives and specifications for an operational system. <sup>community</sup>



Community On-line Intelligence System (COINS)

Experiment

Recommended Guidance for Evaluation

1. To design, develop and implement an experimental, interconnected interagency, on-line, computer based, intelligence information system with remote access capability which will operate at the Top Secret SI security level.

a. How is the achievement of the objective to be identified and measured?

The first part of the objective has been partially achieved; i.e., the system has been designed, the hardware installed and connected by means of crypto protected communication circuits, and intelligence information files are available in all agencies for remote interrogation by users at some participating agencies. When all elements of the network are functioning together as planned and users can access any COINS file in reasonable time during a reasonable period of each working day, the first part will have been achieved.

b. What constitutes success or failure of this objective?

(1) The experiment will prove successful if it evokes a favorable reaction among a cross-section of users in the participating agencies. This reaction may include judgements that a COINS-like system containing more suitable data bases would have high utility in support of the intelligence analytical function.

(2) An adverse user reaction would tend to imply some alternative approach to information exchange was required.

DIA thinks this  
out of  
place  
(to be  
eliminated)

(3) An excessive occurrence of accidental spillage and violations of need to know will constitute prima facie evidence of a failure to achieve the objective.

2. Objective: To test the COINS capability to make data bases in one agency more readily accessible to analysts in other agencies , and to ascertain the essential characteristics of files which make them suitable for inclusion in a COINS-like network.

a. How is the achievement of the objective to be identified and measured?

The COINS switch log will maintain data on file usage, and, in addition, each analyst who queries a COINS file will provide information on file usage satisfaction via the User Log Form. The in depth interviews of COINS users which each COINS participating agency will conduct should be particularly fruitful for obtaining data on user reactions to the COINS concept of accessing files and user file preferences. In addition, the IHC has requested that each of its members provide data on the types of files recommended for inclusion in an operational COINS.

The problem is whether, after determining by experience and interviews that a given file is suitable for an on-line inter-agency system, its characteristics can be identified and assigned meaningful values against which to measure the suitability of proposed new files without resorting to actual on-line retrieval experience with the new files. If possible, an attempt should be made midway during the Test and Analysis Phase to identify those files that appear

to be suitable for interagency use and to evaluate the characteristics which determine that suitability. Some of the factors to be examined are: subject and area coverage, data elements included; size of each record; date span; update frequency; number of users by agency (potential users for a proposed file); response time required by users; alternative methods of data exchange, etc.

b. What constitutes success or failure in the achievement of the objective?

This two fold objective will be successfully met if:

- 1.) The experiment demonstrates that access to information through COINS results in generally favorable user reaction when contrasted with more conventional methods of data exchange.
- 2.) A set of files can be identified which would have high utility in an interagency, on-line system.

3. To provide practical training and actual experience for intelligence analysts in the use of an interagency on-line intelligence retrieval system.

a. How is the achievement of the objective to be identified and measured?

(1) Each COINS participating agency has conducted, is conducting, and will conduct training sessions for potential COINS users. Each agency has produced written training materials describing how to use various portions of the COINS network. The COINS Environment Report, which the Test and Analysis Panel has asked

each COINS participant to prepare, will detail the measures taken by each agency to interest analysts in the use of COINS and the level and detail of training provided.

(2) Periodic reports from the COINS Training Panel will provide information on training activities, status and progress.

(3) In depth interviews of users which are planned by the Test and Analysis Panel will provide insight into the degree of training provided, experience gained and additional training required.

b. What constitutes success or failure in the achievement of the objective?

The objective will be successfully achieved if a representative group of analysts in each COINS participating agency is able to query COINS files with a minimum of difficulty. In addition, those who are so trained must exercise the system sufficiently to gain a level of experience which would permit their evaluation of system utility.

4. To determine those elements of the total system design which encourage and facilitate analyst usage and those elements which discourage or hinder usage.

a. How is the achievement of the objective to be identified and measured?

The following factors must be examined to determine the threshold between encouraging and discouraging analyst use. For example, analysts might be encouraged to use a system that was 90 percent reliable but would be discouraged from using a system that was less reliable.

- (a) Suitability of data bases.
- (b) Number, type, location and ease of operation of remote terminals.
- (c) Query languages: one vs. many, abbreviations/ mnemonics versus plain language, query procedures, utilization of preprogrammed queries, etc.
- (d) Response time
- (e) System reliability
- (f) System availability (days and hours)
- (g) Usability and readability of outputs
- (h) Type and amount of user training
- (i) Currency of data bases
- (j) Interactive vs. non-interactive operation
- (k) Type and quality of analyst aids (handbooks, on-line file and query descriptions, etc.)

b. What constitutes success or failure in the achievement of the objective?

This objective will be successfully met if each agency is conscientious in its collection of data on user reactions to CCINS. Low user participation in CCINS could result in inadequate data collection and consequently therefore would constitute evidence of questionable utility of the system.

3. To collect the necessary data on file usage, system efficiency and reliability and user reaction to permit an evaluation of the feasibility and utility of operational implementation of a follow-on CCINS-like system.

a. How is the achievement of this objective to be identified and measured?

The Test and Analysis Panel has developed a plan, procedures, and forms for collection the desired data and this plan has been approved by all COINS participants. However, it should be constantly reviewed (monthly at least) during the T&A period to determine if additions, deletions, or modifications are necessary.

b. What constitutes success or failure in the achievement of the objective?

If the data collection plan is followed as recommended, this objective will be partially or fully met. Partial failure could result from gaps in the data collection plan which were not foreseen.

6. Determine the elements and attributes which seem critical to an operational Community system.

a. How is the achievement of this objective to be identified and measured?

Development of the principal objectives and specifications for an operational Community system will be the culmination of the evaluated total experience of the COINS Experiment.

b. What constitutes success or failure in the achievement of this objective?

This objective could fail on two counts:

(1) It will fail if inadequate or inconclusive data is collected in an area critical to the design of an operational system.

(2) It will succeed if the data collected during the operational test conclusively proves that an operational COINS type network is not required at this time or if sufficient data are obtained to define the principal parameters of an operational Community system.